

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 199945
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 PCH-02
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH
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-----002837 082006Z /64

O 081936Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
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PAGE 02 STATE 199945

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
DOD
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT AND BACKGROUND BRIEFING:
SADAT AND BEGIN COMING TO U.S.

1. FOLLOWING IS THE ANNOUNCEMENT READ BY JODY POWELL AT
THE WHITE HOUSE, 11:30 A.M., AUGUST 8, 1978:

BEGIN TEXT THE PRESIDENT IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT
PRESIDENT SADAT AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN HAVE ACCEPTED
AN INVITATION TO COME TO CAMP DAVID ON SEPTEMBER 5 FOR A
MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT TO SEEK A FRAMEWORK FOR PEACE
IN THE MIDEAST.

ALL THREE LEADERS AGREE THAT THERE IS NO TASK MORE
IMPORTANT THAN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE. SECRETARY VANCE HAS
INFORMED THE PRESIDENT THAT BOTH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND
PRESIDENT SADAT HAVE WELCOMED THE MEETING, AND THE
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 199945

PRESIDENT IS GRATIFIED BY THEIR RESPONSE.

EACH OF THE THREE LEADERS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A SMALL
NUMBER OF THEIR PRINCIPAL ADVISORS. NO SPECIFIC TIME
HAS BEEN SET FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING. END TEXT.

2. FOLLOWING IS THE BACKGROUND BRIEFING, ATTRIBUTABLE TO

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL, GIVEN FOLLOWING THE WHITE HOUSE
ANNOUNCEMENT:

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: THIS IS GOING TO BE EXTREMELY
BRIEF. I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT THIS INITIATIVE WAS TAKEN
BECAUSE LATELY IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN SITUATION THERE HAS
BEEN AN EVIDENT SLOW-DOWN IN THE MOMENTUM TOWARD PEACE.

THERE HAVE BEEN INTENSIFIED POLEMICS. IT HAS BEEN CLEAR
THAT THE PARTIES, INSTEAD OF MOVING TOWARD PEACE HAVE BEEN
DRIFTING AWAY FROM IT.

IT WAS IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT THE PRESIDENT DECIDED
TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE OF BRINGING THE PARTIES TOGETHER.

WE FEEL THAT THIS WAS DONE, NOT BECAUSE THE CHANCES OF PEACE ARE RIGHT NOW SO HIGH, BUT THAT THE STAKES IN PEACE ARE VERY HIGH.

NOT BECAUSE THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE WERE SO GOOD, BUT BECAUSE THE RISKS HAVE, IN FACT, RISEN.

WE FEEL THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM TOWARD PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF CONSIDERATIONS OF REGIONAL STABILITY, BUT BECAUSE OF THE LARGER INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC. WE HAVE NO ILLUSIONS THAT MEETING IN CAMP DAVID WILL ITSELF PRODUCE A SETTLEMENT, BUT IT CAN CERTAINLY HELP A GREAT DEAL IN NARROWING DOWN THE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 199945

EXISTING DIFFERENCES. IT CAN HELP A GREAT DEAL BY BRINGING THE PARTIES AT THE TOP LEVEL INTO FACE-TO-FACE SUSTAINED PERSONAL CONTACT TO SURFACE THE EXISTING AREAS OF AGREEMENT WHICH HAVE BEEN PRODUCED BY THE PRESIDENT'S EFFORTS, PERSISTENT DIFFICULT EFFORTS, OF THE LAST 18 MONTHS. AND THESE EFFORTS HAVE, IN FACT, SIDENED THE AREA OF AGREEMENT.

AND WE FEEL THAT THROUGH SUCH PERSONAL CONTACT WE CAN ENCOURAGE THE PARTIES TO RESUME MORE DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES. WE, THUS, HOPE THAT BY SETTING UP THIS MEETING WE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE REMOVAL OF THE OBSTACLES THAT HAVE BOTH LATELY, BUT ALSO MORE GENERALLY PREVENTED MOVEMENT TOWARD PEACE, AND THE MEETING AT CAMP DAVID IS DESIGNED TO SERVE THAT OBJECTIVE.

THAT IS ALL I CAN SAY AT THIS STAGE BY WAY OF BACKGROUND REGARDING OUR EXPECTATIONS.

Q. ON YOUR OWN STATEMENT, WOULD YOU EXPLAIN WHEN YOU

SAY, "THE RISKS ARE GREATER NOW," WHY?

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: THE RISKS ARE GREATER NOW ONLY IN THE SENSE THAT THE MOMENTUM TOWARD PEACE HAS SLOWED DOWN AND IN A SITUATION WITH SUCH A TRAGIC HISTORY, WITH SO MANY COMPLEXITIES, AS THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS PEACE SLOWS DOWN, THEN THOSE WHO OPPOSE PEACE AND ACCOMMODATION BECOME MORE ACTIVE, MORE ASSERTIVE. AND THAT IN ITSELF IS A RISK.

Q. YOU SAY THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT SAYS THEY ARE GOING TO SEEK A FRAMEWORK AT THIS MEETING IN CAMP DAVID. UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 199945

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: LET ME SAY THIS. WE ARE GOING TO BE VERY RELUCTANT TO GET INTO MUCH DETAIL ABOUT THIS AT THIS POINT. SECRETARY VANCE, AS YOU KNOW, IS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE HAS BEEN TALKING DIRECTLY TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED. WE HAVE NOT BEEN INDIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH THEM OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF DAYS. ANY DETAILED SORT OF INFORMATION WILL HAVE TO COME FROM HIM ON THE ROAD AND I SUGGEST THAT YOU TRY TO DEAL WITH YOUR PEOPLE THAT ARE ACCOMPANYING HIM ON GREATER DETAIL. WE ARE NOT GOING TO GET INTO AN EXTENDED DISCUSSION HERE.

Q. WHAT I WANT TO ASK YOU IS NOT IN DETAIL.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I SUSPECT IT IS SOMETHING WE WILL NOT WANT TO GET INTO. I WILL LET YOU FINISH YOUR QUESTION JUST TO BE POLITE, IF YOU WISH.

Q. YOU DON'T MEAN TO SAY THE WHITE HOUSE HASN'T BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SECRETARY VANCE THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS, DO YOU?

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: NOT ONLY DID I NOT MEAN TO SAY THAT, I DID NOT EVEN COME CLOSE TO SAYING THAT. I THINK YOU SEE WHY ---

Q. COULD I FOLLOW UP THIS QUESTION?

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: WHY DON'T YOU FILE ON WHAT YOU HAVE? I THINK THAT IS AS MUCH AS WE CAN DO FOR YOU.

CHRISTOPHER

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS.

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